

CDF NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



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SAN BERNARDINO - As firefighters continue their efforts to control the Arrowhead Fire, the Major incident Investigation Team from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection continues their work today. A special flight of the CDF AIRIS aircraft is expected today. AIRIS is the Airborne Infra-Red Imaging System and contains a state of the art thermal imaging system as well as other information gathering capabilities. The purpose of the flight will be to gather photographic information related to the training class. This information will be used as a comparison with aerial photos taken earlier this year of the same general location. The AIRIS' infra- red capabilities may also be used on the main fire to map unseen hotspots around and within the perimeter of the fire.

Today investigators will continue to interview personnel that were present either attending the firing techniques class as students or there in support of the class. Fire investigators are consolidating their information as to the origin of the spot fire that ignited after the training fires had been extinguished. The damage assessment team members are continuing their efforts to identify property damaged by the flames. The fire weather behavior specialist is pulling together reports from several different sources regarding the weather and other conditions during the time of the training fires.

This was a live fire training class not a vegetation management burn. Friday's training fire was actually a series of several small fires that in total covered less than one acre. Investigators have confirmed that there was no water shortage at the site of the training fires as was mistakenly reported.

It will be the task of the Investigation Team to ascertain the facts of what happened then produce an official finding that will be delivered to the Director of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Andrea Tuttle who will then decide what action to take on those findings. Acting quickly to reduce the possibility of this happening again, CDF Director Tuttle yesterday ordered a second level of review at the region and Sacramento Headquarters level prior to any live fire training or controlled burn taking place.

This incident is a reminder of how quickly even the smallest fire can grow in these hot, dry conditions. Please be extra careful with fire.

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